

HARNEY HAY COMPANY GRAZING PERMIT RENEWAL

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
OR-025-03-044

Bureau of Land Management
Burns District Office
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

Grazing permittees who graze their livestock on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land shall have grazing permits issued to them under the grazing regulations (43 CFR 4130.2(a)). Grazing permits shall be issued for a term of 10 years unless there is some reason which requires a term of less than 10 years under the grazing regulations (43 CFR 4130.2(d)). In this case, the Harney Hay Company grazing permit will be issued for a period of 3 years, because they have a 3-year base property lease.

The Three Rivers Resource Management Plan (RMP) of 1992, identified land that was available for livestock grazing. The land in the Rock Creek Allotment (#5502), for which Harney Hay Company has a grazing permit, meets the criteria set forth in the Three Rivers RMP under GM 1.4, Page 2-37 (refer to Maps A and B). This action is also in conformance with applicable Tribal, State, and County Land Use Plans. (This analysis is tiered to the Three Rivers RMP and incorporates by reference, the information and analysis contained within the RMP.)

There are currently sage-grouse and/or its habitat present in the allotment under this term grazing permit. The current grazing system addresses the needs of sage-grouse and, therefore, should not be in conflict with the needs for sage-grouse.

An analysis of the grazing systems used on the Rock Creek Allotment (#5502) for compliance with the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management was completed in July 17, 1997. The analysis showed that the allotment was meeting the standards and guidelines under current management practices.

CHAPTER II: ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

A. Description of the Proposed Action

The proposed action is to issue Harney Hay Company a 3-year term livestock grazing permit with the same terms and conditions as the expiring permit. This would continue the existing grazing management and would be the same as a no action alternative. Therefore, both alternatives will be analyzed under the proposed action. There has been monitoring of the effects of the current livestock grazing system in place within the allotment for a number of years. These study sites have been read periodically for more than 30 years. Monitoring data collected was last formally analyzed in 1997. The data analyzed indicates that allotment objectives are currently being met.

B. No Grazing Alternative

The proposed action would continue current terms and conditions. Monitoring has shown that allotment resource objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health are being met. Therefore, while a "No Grazing Alternative" has been considered, for the above reasons this alternative will not be addressed further in this document.

CHAPTER III: DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The following critical elements of the human environment have been analyzed in the Three Rivers RMP and are not present or will not be affected by the proposed action or alternative: Prime or Unique Farmlands, Floodplains, Hazardous Materials, Special Management Areas, Research Natural Areas, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas, Air Quality, Water Quality, Cultural Heritage, American Indian Religious Concerns, Noxious Weeds, Paleontology, Special Status Fauna, and Special Status Flora.

Migratory Birds: Some migratory birds are known to use the project area for nesting, foraging, and resting as they pass through on their yearly migrations.

Environmental Justice: There are no economically disadvantaged or minority populations present within the project area.

Adverse Energy Impacts: No known adverse impacts would occur to energy development, production or distribution as a result of the proposed action.

CHAPTER IV: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. Proposed Action

1. Anticipated Impacts

Grazing use for Harney Hay Company would be authorized under a new term grazing permit. The level and timing of use by livestock in the allotment would not change from what was authorized at the time the Three Rivers RMP was adopted. Since the writing of the RMP/EIS, the following resources have been recognized and were not analyzed in the RMP/EIS:

- a. Migratory Birds: There would be no known effect on migratory birds by the issuing of this livestock grazing permit.
- b. Environmental Justice: There are no economically disadvantaged or minority populations which would be disproportionately affected by issuance of a livestock grazing permit.
- c. Adverse Energy Impacts: There are no known impacts which would occur

to any energy-related resources as a result of issuing a livestock grazing permit.

2. Cumulative Impacts

There are no known cumulative impacts, either positive or negative, that would occur if a grazing permit is issued.

CHAPTER V: PERSONS AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

Harney Hay Company, Grazing Permittee

CHAPTER VI: PARTICIPATING STAFF

Bill Andersen, Range Management Specialist, Lead Preparer
Gary Foulkes, District Planning/Environmental Coordinator
Terri Geisler, Geologist
Fred McDonald, Natural Resource Specialist-Recreation
Glen Patterson, Natural Resource Specialist
Lesley Richman, Weed Specialist
Joan Suther, Field Manager
Fred Taylor, Wildlife Biologist
Nora Taylor, District Botanist
Scott Thomas, Archaeologist
Michael Weston, Watershed Specialist